

The Fund Founder Spotlight: Alex Abelin of PlantBaby and Kiki Milk

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Welcome to *The Founder Spotlight* where we highlight the incredible people behind the companies we've backed at [The Fund](#). This week the spotlight is on [Alex Abelin](#), co-CEO and co-founder of [PlantBaby](#), a future-forward nutrition company offering a portfolio of clean-label, organic, plant-based foods and beverages to support families on the nutritional journey from infancy to adulthood. PlantBaby's launch product is [Kiki Milk](#), a dairy-free milk made for kids, and enjoyed by all.



Alex Abelin, Co-Founder and Co-CEO of PlantBaby

When you become a parent, you only want what's absolutely best for your child, especially when it comes to what they're putting inside their bodies. So when Alakai turned six months old, Co-founders and Co-parents [Alex Abelin](#) and [Lauren Abelin](#) got to work as they needed to find a suitable infant formula supplement. Alakai had a dairy aversion and was experiencing colic, so their pediatrician advised them to use an organic, dairy-free and soy-free infant formula. Turns out they couldn't find anything on the market that met their needs. This was the catalyst for creating [PlantBaby](#), the parent company of their dairy-free milk launch product, [Kiki Milk](#). What started as a solution to their own problem has turned into a vision of supporting the health and wellness of families around the world.

Prior to PlantBaby, Alex spent over seven years at Google and then built two successful tech companies, one of which was sold to Verizon. This is his third company and his most personal, as it's the first one he's built from the ground up. Alex is loving the journey of building PlantBaby to become an integral and integrated part of his family. He values the incredible partnership and teamwork between his wife and him, his vision, a health and nutrition background, and experience from his Mom. Alex provides the hustle, business skills and the passion required to create a successful company. It's a perfect storm.

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- **What is PlantBaby's "North Star"?**

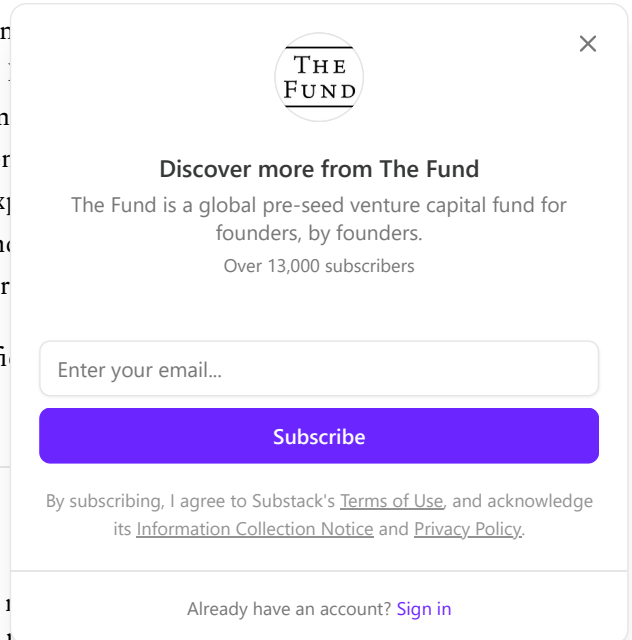
PlantBaby's North Star is to nourish people with real food, help people to strengthen their connection to food and its source, and restore harmony in agricultural systems. The unfortunate reality is that today's supermarkets are stocked with a bunch of processed foods that are filled with artificial ingredients and additives. Living in Hawaii made us realize how much more connected we are to nature, the cycles, to real food, farmers markets, and the vibrant, local fruits and vegetables. There is an abundance of organic whole foods that are nutrient dense on Kauai. These natural foods do not contain artificial or unnatural flavors or refined sugars. We feel our best when we go back to the basics, back to the way nature intended it, and we're inspired to make organic whole foods more accessible to families around the world.

- **What makes Kiki Milk a "must have" vs. a "nice to have"?**

Kiki Milk is the best-tasting, organic, dairy-free milk on the market. Although I may be a bit biased, I truly believe this to be true and our five-star reviews are pouring in with positive feedback on quality, texture and taste. Many dairy-free alternative milks lean on one ingredient like almond or soy, but Kiki Milk is different as we're a blend of whole food, nutrient dense fruits and vegetables. We were meticulous and super focused on making sure that only the best ingredients are found in Kiki Milk, so it's safe for kids, and enjoyed by all. We find that parents love the product just as much as the kids do. It's also worth highlighting that Kiki Milk is a climate-friendly beverage.

- **What are some other products on the horizon for PlantBaby and Kiki Milk?**

We're launching with Original and Chocolate Kiki Milk. Our next three SKUs are going to be 1. Unsweetened (no sugar added and no sweeteners), 2. Superfruit, a colorful milk rich in antioxidants and 3. Macadamia, because we saw the lack of high quality mac-nut milks on the market and we're a Hawaii-based brand, afterall. We have some other products coming out like Kiki Yo (yogurt) and Kiki Ice Cream. We have a



strong determination to make the origin products that inspired us to build the company, including PlantBaby Infant Formula and PlantBaby Toddler Milk. Another exciting and innovative product we're developing is called Superfood Sprinkles, which are nutrient-dense, fun shaped sprinkles made of organic fruits and vegetables. Imagine putting Superfood Sprinkles on mac 'n' cheese or pizza (you're basically adding a serving of fruits and vegetables without even tasting it, plus it's super fun)!

- **Do you have any advice for up-and-coming founders?**

Some sage advice I received years ago is to solve your own pain point because if you can solve your own problem, chances are other people have the same problem, and that means there's probably a good business found in there. There are always going to be mountains to climb so you need to have an emotional connection to the idea, and a lot of guts (pun intended for a CPG company). For any good business to succeed you need your head, heart and guts to align. The head can sometimes be the easy part, but the heart and guts contain the secret ingredients to make something special. Also, it's a good idea to try not to take things too seriously, or personally. I keep in mind the impermanence of this whole journey, and it's really important to take moments to celebrate and dance and enjoy!

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